(c) by when it would be considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Three proposals for construction of roads on BOT basis, namely, Mumbai-Talasari, Mumbai-Nasik and Mumbai-Mahad Expressways were received from Government of Maharashtra in September 1998 for environmental clearance. Due to inadequate information, the proposals on Mumbai-Nasik and Mumbai-Mahad Expressway were closed in December 1999 and June 1999 respectively. In respect of Mumbai-Talasari, though the proposal was closed in April, 1999 due to inadequate information, clarifications were received in January 2000 and the file was reopened for further processing.

Rate of afforestation and deforestation

933. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the area under forestry in 60s, 70s, 80s and in 1999;

(b) the rate of afforestation and deforestation taking place in the country; and

(c) what is its distinct effect on environment and ecology, felt so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) As per records, legal forest area of the country were 40.48, 66.80 and 76.52 million hectares in 1950-51, 1976-77 and 1993—95 respectively.

(b) Forest Survey of India started assessing forest cover of the country from 1987. As per State of Forest Reports, forest cover of the country has declined from 6,40,819 sq.km to 6,33,397 sq.km. in the period from 1981—83 to 1993—95. An area of 28.38 million hectares has been brought under afforestation from 1951 to 1998.

(c) Any distinct effect of decline in forest cover on environment and ecology has not been quantified.

Approval of Shivri-Nhawa-Sheva Link Road and Western Express Highway

†934. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN:
SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that proposal for shivri-Nhawa-Sheva Link Road and Western Express Highway from Worli to Nariman Point is pending with the Ministry for approval;

(b) if so, what is the estimated cost thereof;

(c) by when it would be considered; and

(d) the reasons for not considering it till now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (d) No, Sir. The proposal for Shivri-Nhawa-Sheva Link Road at an estimated cost of Rs. 6600 croes including the rail link was received in May 1998 for environmental clearance. The proposal for Worli-Nariman Point Sea Link Project at an estimated cost of Rs. 1500 crores was received in August 1999. Due to inadequate information, these proposals were not considered and the proponents were requested to submit complete details which have not been received.

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† Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.